The Court of the Queen

(A Gnostic Mass)

by Frater Hymenæus Alpha

(5-12-69)

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presented by members of
Thelema Lodge, Ordo Templi Orientis
under the direction of Caitlin Hussey Wildermuth
in honor of the 86th anniversary
of Grady McMurtry's Lesser Feast
☉ 26° ♎, ☾ 2° ♑, ANNO $IIII_{12}$
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Dramatis Personæ
in order of appearance:

STAR SON
and
SERPENT BROTHER

THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN
and
THE HOLY DEAD MAN

THE VIRGIN OF CANCELLATIONS
and
THE ASPIRANT

Directions: the poetry is to be spoken boldly and directly, and is not to be "recited."

The Court of the Queen
(A Gnostic Mass)

Enter **STAR SON** *(upper stage right) and* **SERPENT BROTHER** *(upper stage left), and proceed parallel past Throne of the Queen, then converge down stage center.*

STAR SON: Deus ex Machina

So has it come to this
The Hour of Peril
When Armageddon roils the storm of war
And kilted Mars bestrides a crumbling world
Of armor plated dragons belching flame
Of slant winged harpies sharding through a haze
Of incandescent fury
And of monstrous eggs
Ovum of a world gone mad with fear
And rationed thought

Such is the fate of gadget minded man
Who placed his faith in mechanistic thought
And sought no higher good than pleasure-pain
That now he finds his logic's fatal flaw
In skew-wise reason

And his need for love
Is smothered in the coils of The Machine
Upon whose altar lies his lilied soul
Till Moloch's triggered fingers arc the arms
That feed the flames

SERPENT BROTHER: Of Emerald Earth

As space-borne fleets of Viking mariners
Swing round a world impregnable
To jettison each a cargo
Bomb shattering, irresistible

And space-marines with visored helms
Drop through the black
Of night, with strife that overwhelms
Upon the atom shattered wrack
Of worlds at war

So seetee sharded Adonis
Mills round an elder, wiser Sun
While astroids from her scattered hulk
Rust on the flame-scored plains of Mars

Now must we mark that cosmic war
When god-men stormed the Titan host
With atom fire—

Lest darkness fall
And Night engulf the Citadel
Of Emerald Earth

Follows play of light and shadow.

Enter **THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN,** *escorted on Her right by* **THE HOLY DEAD MAN** *(from upper stage right), followed as in a procession by* **THE VIRGIN OF CANCELLATIONS** *escorted by* **THE ASPIRANT** *(masked). They proceed to down stage right, circle left to down stage left, circle back up stage to throne (set on a high altar). At the base (ramp or steps) of altar he [***THE HOLY DEAD MAN***] stops, she [***THE QUEEN***] proceeds to first stage, turns, and speaks.*

THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN:

The Mystical Marriage of the Soldier and the Queen

I am the Virgin of the Queen.
Do you accept me?

I am the Representative of Heaven and Earth.
Do you accept me?

I am the Virgin whereby all things are accomplished,
but am not myself changed thereby.
Do you accept me?

Who accepts my burden may never lay me down.
Do you accept me?

Who binds himself to me can never again be free,
for I am all things to all men.
Do you accept me?

To seek me is to enter upon the Holy Quest for Oblivion,
for you must give All that you may attain Nothing.
Dare you accept me?

I am the Promise and I am the Fulfillment.
Dare you accept me?

I am the Negative in the Supernal Union
of the interpenetration of the Opposites.
Dare you accept me?

I am Purity beyond all comprehension of Cancellation.
I am the Balance of the Wheel, and the Fiery Feather
of Maat.
Dare you accept me?

THE HOLY DEAD MAN: *Response:*

There is no holier vessel
than a Maiden who has become a Virgin,
for a Virgin may attain
even unto the Throne of the Queen.

THE QUEEN & THE HOLY DEAD MAN (both): *Anthem:*

We are a community of the living and the dead.
We are the Deathless Stars who manifest
in a Higher State of Existence.
We are the Serpent Flower that is Death and Second Birth.
We are the next Stage of Oblivion.

*He [***THE HOLY DEAD MAN***] then proceeds up steps, escorts Her [***THE QUEEN***] to Throne, and seats Her. He then retires down to second level and takes his position on the right below* **THE QUEEN**. *At this point* **THE ASPIRANT**, *who with* **THE VIRGIN** *[had] remained center stage (approximately) as* **DEAD MAN** *escorted* **QUEEN** *up steps, escorts* **VIRGIN** *to first level where she takes her position on left. He then retires to center stage and faces* **QUEEN**.

SERPENT BROTHER: Her Lovely Hair

I walked the dog in the woods today
And he consecrated the trees
We watched the bounding squirrels at play,
Crunched the snow in the rustling lees,
And echoed his joyous, belling bay
Down the hollow eternities.

Existential monad swaying
Star imago, molten attire
Lepidoptera unfolding
Metamorphosis, Angel fire

I walked the woods of the world today

The wood of the Ruined Towers
Where night-side trees in their Panic sway
To a lyre of lethal powers
I saw my skull in the disarray
Of Her gorgon-serpent flowers

Diana Archer, Maid of Light
Slayer of the Dragon-Tree
Thy Beauty's Beast, Thy Serpent Priest
Burst my head, and set me free

Her Arrow coursed the bright sea sands
And found me in my lair:
The universe came apart in my hands
And I pray-said Her lovely hair.

STAR SON *gives "Response"*

There is no holier vessel
than a Maiden who has become a Virgin,
for a Virgin may attain
even unto the Throne of the Queen.

STAR SON: Angel Far

My mind is as bleak as the steppes of the Moon
And as cold as the Uranian air
My heart is as hot as the brightside noon
Exploding in a solar flare
And with the lion love of my fiery boon
I burn in Her glorious hair

The galaxies
Are Arrow-Trees
Plumed by Maat's bright feather
Our Maid's fierce love's

A glowing sea
That holds the worlds together

SERPENT BROTHER *gives "Response"*

There is no holier vessel
than a Maiden who has become a Virgin,
for a Virgin may attain
even unto the Throne of the Queen.

THE HOLY DEAD MAN: Dea

The leeching vacuum of hard space
Has sucked my tissues dry
And left a little pile of dust
Beneath the Gothic sky.

Mother Goddess, Queen of Space
Virgin of the Caverned Deep
Crone of Dark Death, Maiden bright
Magnet of Thy Star-son's leap

Thy longing pulls all worlds to Thee
Upon the dark Space Sea.
Intoxicated on our Blood
Thy Soul sings fittingly.

Mother Goddess, Queen of Space
Virgin of the Caverned Deep
Crone of Dark Death, Maiden bright
Magnet of Thy Star-son's leap

Thy spirit of stability
Moves on the altered Dark;
The Blood Thy Saints have bled for Thee
Spills from Thy grail-fire Ark.

Mother Goddess, Queen of Space
Virgin of the Caverned Deep
Crone of Dark Death, Maiden bright
Magnet of Thy Star-son's leap

Thy crescent priestess, Lunar Star,
Has met me on Thy path
To guide my driving, homeward thrust
And shield Thy Gorgon wrath.

Mother Goddess, Queen of Space
Virgin of the Caverned Deep
Crone of Dark Death, Maiden bright
Magnet of Thy Star-son's leap

Thy Beauty, drunken on our Blood
And pregnant with our Death,
Casts forth our soul-fire, born again
As Stars before Thy breath.

Mother Goddess, Queen of Space
Virgin of the Caverned Deep
Crone of Dark Death, Maiden bright
Magnet of Thy Star-son's leap

Chorus (all except **QUEEN***) giving the "Response"*

There is no holier vessel
than a Maiden who has become a Virgin,
for a Virgin may attain
even unto the Throne of the Queen.

Thy Serpent Priest

SERPENT BROTHER: In Eden stands Thy Serpent Priest
STAR SON: In Space Thy Serpent Flower

THE HOLY DEAD MAN: The Heaven of Thy holy lust
Has burst my casement tower.

THE VIRGIN OF CANCELLATIONS: The Unicorn

I saw the god Harpocrates
Stride forth into the glow
Of cloud bank suns, whole galaxies
Their stars like drifting snow
I saw the wide eternities
Of dust stars sift and flow.

O Lady Ishtar lift the bowl
And drain the Life that is our Blood
O Wine, Illusion of the Soul,
Be Nectar of the living flood!

O hollow god Harpocrates
Writ large upon the rift
Of space-time continuities
Thy bloodless Saints adrift
Between the walled realities
Have felt the space tide's lift!

O Lady Ishtar lift the bowl
And drain the Life that is our Blood
O Wine, Illusion of the Soul,
Be Nectar of the living flood!

Chorus (all except **QUEEN***) giving "Response"*

There is no holier vessel
than a Maiden who has become a Virgin,
for a Virgin may attain
even unto the Throne of the Queen.

THE ASPIRANT: The Black Osiris

Dread Virgin, Mother, Harlot, Crone
Thy dusky beauty sears my dreams
Direct my quest to Thee alone
Dissolve this world in all it seems
KALI! Mother of Horror

Transmitter of the Secret Seed
Thyself untouched and undefiled
Bend down and bless us in our need
Pure black perfection that has smiled
KALI! Mother of Horror

Deep black Abyss that is the mind
Eternal Worm that cannot die
Save by Your grace to humankind:
Relieve us in our agony
KALI! Mother of Horror

Dark Virgin pregnant with The Child
The Dragon's Head is raised for Thee
To tred upon. The bruise is mild
But he explodes in ecstasy
KALI! Mother of Horror

*With each verse he advances one step. At each "*KALI!*" he throws his left forearm up, horizontal across his eyes, to shut out the awful sight.* **THE QUEEN** *has risen and pulled the Kali mask to Her and is standing looking through it.*

F I N I S

Notes on Grady's Verses

All dates are *era vulgaris*. In addition to the previous publications listed, each of these poems appeared in the *Thelema Lodge Calendar* (1990-1993) and in *The Poetry of Grady McMurtry* (Berkeley: 1994).

Deus ex Machina -- March 11, 1952 -- published in *Kaaba* #4 (April 1979) and *The Grady Project* #1 (Berkeley: O.T.O., October 1987).

Of Emerald Earth -- 5/25/49 -- published in *Kaaba* #4 (1979) and in *The Grady Project* #1 (1987).

The Mystical Marriage of the Soldier and the Queen (from the unfinished cycle *Rhadamanthus*) -- 6/28/62 (0920 hrs) -- published in *O.T.O. Newsletter* #7-8 (May 1979), and in *Ecclesia Gnostica* #4 (1985).

Her Lovely Hair -- 1/12/62 -- published in *O.T.O. Newsletter* #5 (June 1978), *Ecclesia Gnostica* #2 (winter 1985) with the author's dedication "for: Julie Weber and her Magick Theater," in McMurtry, *Poems* (London, England & Bergen, Norway: O.T.O., 1986), and in *The Grady Project* #3 (March 1988). This poem and those which follow are from the cycle *Dark Space and Bright Stars*.

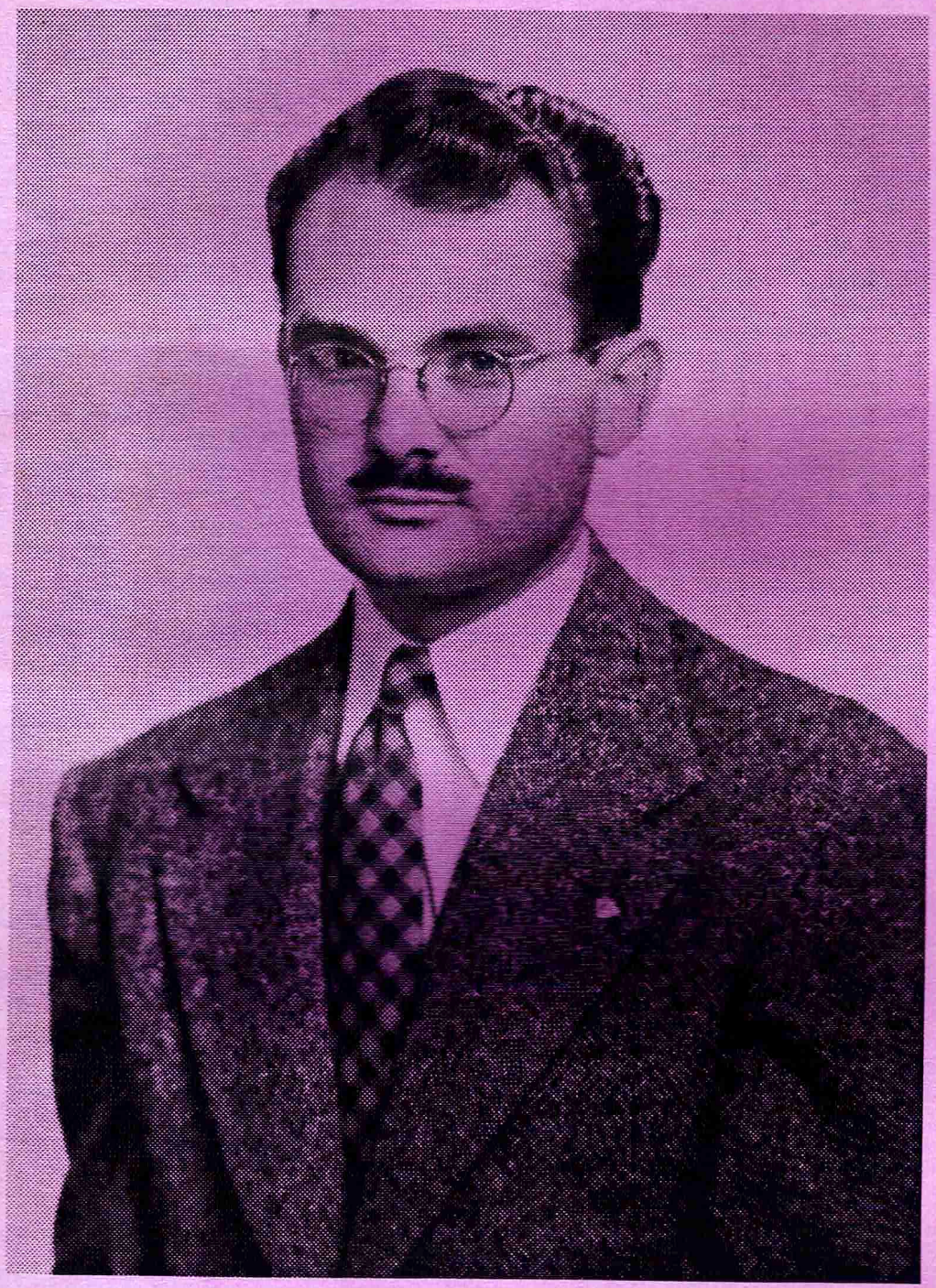
Angel Far -- 1/14/62 -- published in *O.T.O. Newsletter* #10-11 (1980), McMurtry, *Poems* (1986), and in *The Grady Project* #3 (1988).

Dea -- 4/4/62 -- published in McMurtry, *Poems* (1986), and in *The Grady Project* #3 (1988).

Thy Serpent Priest -- 4/4/62 -- published in *O.T.O. Newsletter* #9 (1979), in *Ecclesia Gnostica* #2 (1985), in McMurtry, *Poems* (1986), and in *The Grady Project* #3 (1988).

The Unicorn -- 5/18/61 & 6/11/61 -- published in *O.T.O. Newsletter* #4 (March 1978), in *Ecclesia Gnostica* #4 (1985), and in McMurtry, *Poems* (1986). Grady attributed this poem to the Lust Trump in the Thoth deck.

The Black Osiris -- 6/24/61 -- published in McMurtry, *Poems* (1986), then in *The Grady Project* #4 (December 1988).



Grady Louis McMurtry
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18 October 1918 – 12 July 1985 E.V.